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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 001947

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PINR](#) [IR](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: MEK REJECTS GOI PROPOSAL FOR CAMP ASHRAF AND  
PREDICTS DEMISE OF IRANIAN REGIME

REF: BAGHDAD 1847

Classified By: Acting Political Counselor Eric Carlson for Reasons 1.4  
(b & d)

(S) Summary: Mojgan Parsaie, the defacto leader of the Mujahideen-e-Khalq (MEK) at their headquarters in Camp Ashraf, Iraq, told Brigadier General David Quantock (CG TF-134) and Emboffs on July 16 (via VTC) that the residents of Camp Ashraf had lost all trust in the Government of Iraq (GOI) as a result of the latter's "ongoing siege" and "inhumane and awful" treatment of the camp's residents. It was up to the GOI to make concessions to rebuild the trust, she asserted. Relocating the camp was impossible and non-negotiable as far as the MEK was concerned. By ramping up pressure on the camp, the GOI proved that it was doing Tehran's bidding against the MEK, she claimed. Parsaie dismissed as misguided and unnecessary the GOI's proposal to establish a police station in the camp and appointment of a new base commander from Basrah. She asserted that "the Iranian regime will be overthrown very soon." End summary.

11. (S) On July 16, 2009, CG TF- 134 (tasked with security oversight of Camp Ashraf) convened a VTC with MEK representatives, headed by Mojgan Parsaie, in Camp Ashraf (Diyala, Iraq) to convey, per reftel, the GOI's plans to: establish a police station in Camp Ashraf; appoint a new Iraqi commander for the camp; and eventually relocate the residents to an alternative site, possibly Camp Echo (Diwaniya province), in order to permanently close the camp. CG TF-134 explained that these plans demonstrated GOI good faith and willingness to resolve the status of the camp and its residents peacefully. He urged the MEK to cooperate and find common ground with the GOI, given the latter's role as Iraq's legitimate political authority.

12. (S) Parsaie, a soft-spoken woman in her early 40s, railed against what she described as the GOI's lack of good faith and intentional abuse of camp residents. "We have done our part, it's time for the Iraqis to do theirs," she replied when asked to compromise. Without offering specific details, she decried the "ongoing siege" of the camp as inhumane, noting that camp residents were now "struggling for our basic human rights." While acknowledging that foodstuffs and other amenities were flowing into the camp, she and her colleagues criticized the checkpoints and the Iraqi police for blocking entry to MEK lawyers seeking access to the camp. She asserted that the GOI was "doing all this because of pressure from Tehran" with the hopes of disintegrating the camp. Such an outcome will be catastrophic, Parsaie warned and declared that "the Iraqis cannot assert sovereignty through force."

¶3. (S) Parsaie dismissed the GOI plan to appoint a new police commander and to establish a police station in the camp, asserting that there is no need for Iraqi police in the camp--regardless of how unbiased or professional they may be. "We are already in a detention center because of the siege" she decried, "why make it worse by adding police?" Parsaie recounted that the GOI considers police necessary in order to protect the camp residents from their MEK commanders, a claim she dismissed while remarking that police are for cities, not camps. CG TF-134 pointed out that the U.S. military was not there to protect the camp, but rather to monitor, report and prevent a humanitarian disaster. He added that it was in the MEK's best interest to find a mutually agreeable solution with the GOI to ensure camp security since the US does not have the authority to prevent the GOI from putting a police station inside Ashraf or to prevent the camp's dissolution.

¶4. (S) Moving the camp residents to an alternative site, including Camp Echo, was out of the question and non-negotiable, Parsaie affirmed. "We might leave very soon to Iran," she asserted. She cautioned against underestimating the impact the political turmoil was having on the regime's hold on power in Iran and declared that "the regime will be overthrown very soon."

¶5. (S) Parsaie remained non-committal about offering additional compromises to the GOI, but asked for a subsequent face-to-face meeting with TF-134 and emboffs to

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detail her suggestions on the way forward. TF-134 Deputy Commander Admiral Little and Emboffs will attempt a visit to Camp Ashraf on Sunday, July 19, weather permitting, to re-engage Parsaie.

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COMMENT  
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¶6. (S) Parsaie was calm and collected throughout the discussion and spoke in Farsi but exchanged initial pleasantries in English. Her interpreter was another MEK associate. She was joined by one unidentified female notetaker and Mr. Barei, an older male interlocutor who also spoke briefly of his lack of trust in the GOI. At times her demeanor was light-hearted, notably when offered a helicopter ride to see Camp Echo for the proposed relocation. Parsaie and the other female wore a hijab and business suit; Mr. Barei wore a suit and tie. Parsaie took the lead but the three often consulted each other prior to answering questions, suggesting that each of them holds some decision making power. She and her colleagues are convinced that the Iranian government is near its end; this level of MEK enthusiasm and optimism is not altogether unprecedented and was evident near the culmination of the Iran-Iraq war. Despite their political optimism, it's unclear whether Parsaie and her counterparts have a "Plan B" to resolve their Ashraf predicament. It is likely that they will face an increasingly frustrated and uncompromising Iraqi government that is less willing to offer concessions and more inclined to use force to resolve this matter.  
HILL